

# Reflections...

**A Newsletter of the Women of the ELCA + Northern Great Lakes Synod**

**March 2018**

## **A message from...Synod Women's Organization President Melzee Jacobson**

Greetings, We are off and running for a very fully packed year. To begin, I want to tell you all how amazing you are and what amazing work you do on behalf of the Synodical Women's Organization of the Northern Great Lakes Synod. We make an awesome team. This year's retreat will be hosted by ladies from Pound and Porterfield. We were notified in December that they had made the decision to take on this task. It is with pleasure that I can tell you that Pr. Christine Forsythe will be the Chaplain for this retreat. Those that attended in 2017 will remember her as the Chaplain at that time also. Barb Rice and myself of the Executive Board were available to meet with this group of ladies on January 30, 2018 to help them get started on their planning. The excitement and ideas around the table that day were exhilarating. They have some wonderful ideas and met again the other day to further cement some of them in place. The board is excited about the fact that Cluster 5, Menominee, is becoming active again. I received a call from Pr. James Wendt of Our Saviour's in Marinette asking if we could send someone to talk to the ladies about SWO at their Fireside Chat. We have been scheduled for Sunday March 25 to attend that event. At this time, myself, Barb Rice SWO Secretary and Gail Schmidt Board Member and Liaison for Cluster 5 have plans to attend. Other ladies from the churches in the Menominee Cluster are also welcome to attend. There will be a potluck supper also. I have received information from Churchwide about our CWO Representative assigned to attend our Convention and Retreat. Lisa Plorin, our current CWO President, will be traveling to be with us. Lisa is a very enthusiastic leader and a super neat lady. This is your chance to meet her and visit with her. So if you are thinking about attending the convention as a voting member or as a guest and/or the retreat this fall make sure that when you get the May Mailing with all the forms that you quickly register. We have room for 69 attendees to the retreat. We have room for 30 more if you do not mind sleeping on the top bunks in the duplexes but the first 69 to register will have options for Emmanuel, Grace and the duplexes (bottom bunks). In regard to housing: • Please remember that Grace fills up quickly. This is the lodge that has two single beds in each room and there are only 7 rooms available (the Chaplain is housed in room 8 to provide for privacy if anyone wishes to speak with her privately). Bedding is provided for Grace Lodge. • Emmanuel Lodge has six rooms. Room 2 is handicapped and has a queen bed and two single beds. This room is reserved until the registration deadline for any handicap requirements. Each of the other five rooms have two queen beds and are used to sleep 2 people. There is a futon that will fold out to sleep one also in each of these five rooms so it is possible for five to share a room if necessary. So these rooms will either accommodate four to five people. When registering as a group, please identify the others you will be sharing a room with. Bedding is also provided for Emmanuel Lodge. You may not be able to move in until registration time as sometimes there is another group using this lodge on Friday during the day. • Maple, Oak and Spruce are the duplexes. There are five sets of bunkbeds in each side of the duplexes. The bottom bunks are assigned first. If you register as a group, please identify the others that will be joining you. If necessary we can use the top bunks, but only if someone is agreeable to using them. You must provide your own bedding for the duplex. With regards to communication avenues for the Northern Great Lakes Synodical Women's Organization we have the following: o NGLS.org website • You can find information for contacts, events, forms, etcetera on this website under the SWO. o Reflections Newsletter • Each newsletter has listing of the Synodical Women's Board Members with contact information. • You can receive

the Reflections digitally by contacting Barbara Rice. ▪ Or you can order a hard copy to be sent 4 times a year by sending \$5.00 per year for as many years as you would like to Kris Carlson. There is always a newsletter subscription form in the newsletter. or Facebook ▪ We have been able to open up the Northern Great Lakes Synodical Women's Organization (NGLSWO) Group Page on Facebook. You can like the page and join if you would like. You may also add friends that you know as members also. Watch for All Saints Lutheran's article on holding a sewing class for the community in a future Living Lutheran. We received a Thrivent Action Team Grant to instruct others on basic sewing and machine sewing techniques. We had a great turn out for the first class and were able to provide super prizes and nonperishable food for the local food pantry. The event was held on a Saturday and we were able to serve lunch too. The members of the Board and myself are excited about the growth in numbers and interest within our Synodical Women's Organization. Thank you again for all that you do for each other, your communities and the world at large. Melzee Jacobson

## A message from...Synod Women's Organization Vice President Pam Chouinard

*A message from.....SWO Vice President, Getting Old*

**A gray head is a crown of glory, it is found in the way of righteousness. Proverbs 16:31**

Getting old is not for the faint of heart. So much in life has changed. No longer going to work each day; not sure what day it is let alone the date; new aches and pains each day, which is really exciting; post-its all over the place so I don't forget an upcoming commitment; and my personal favorite: I can't remember why I went downstairs for the third time today, got to love that one.

Maturity they say comes with age. That I do strongly believe in. I see and understand things in a different light. I communicate with my heart more than with my voice. I definitely value the small things in life more than ever. And I laugh a lot!

My wonderful girlfriends and I get together once a week to play cards. Sometimes the cards remain in the box. But laughter is always front and center. We laugh at ourselves and with each other until our sides hurt. I have been blessed with the friendship of this group and for that I am most thankful. Remember when you stop laughing you grow old.

*This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24*

God wants us to be joyful and to find happiness. Laughter is closely tied to joy because the feeling of joy can promote laughter. It is often said that "Laughter is the best medicine," and it's true! Laughter releases stress, improves your mood, boost immunity and can even relieve pain.

C.S. Lewis said "You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." My new goal has been to belong to the Synodical Women's Organization. And here I am a member of this wonderful organization. I met so many new Lutheran Women throughout our synod. More women to laugh with!

We are Women of the ELCA. But we are also women **Who Engage in Laughter & Creativity Altogether!**

We are so thankful for each one of you! We pray for continued blessings on all our women in our synod. Enjoy each other's company and don't forget to laugh.

## A message from...Synod Women's Organization Secretary, Barb Rice

### A Word from Your Secretary.

How is it that it is already Lent? It seems that we just boxed up the Christmas decorations. Even during a U.P. Winter, time does fly. On Jan. 30, Melzee Jacobson and I met with Sue Shallow. Pr. Christina Forsythe and the women from the congregations of Beaver (WI) American Lutheran Church and Porterfield (WI) Lutheran Church to begin planning the Women's Fall Retreat, which will be held Sept. 14-16 at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp. The women are full of enthusiasm and bubbling with exciting ideas for programming the Retreat. I am sure that a wonderful experience awaits you all. I also want to share some excitement from the women of my congregation, Bethany Lutheran, Norway, MI. Our little prayer shawl group, Bethany Shawl Sisters and Mistresses, has taken a little break from producing prayer shawls and has been creating scarves with which we "scarf bomb" the local Feed America mobile food pantry events in our area. In December, we tied 26 scarves on the chairs in the hospitality area for the participants to take as needed. It was heartwarming to watch people wrapping themselves and others in the warmth they provide. As our next event approaches at the end of next week, we will have at least 60 scarves to give. It has been good to be God's Hands in providing for others and we will continue this project for the winter months of 2018-19. I also share this with you because our group only has 4 knitters/crocheters; big things can happen with only a few! Many blessings to you all!

Respectfully submitted, Barb Rice, SWO Secretary.

## A Message from...Synod Women's Organization Treasurer, Kris Carlson

### GREETINGS FROM SWO TREASURER, KRIS CARLSON

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY: Here are more details on the offerings collected at the SWO Convention and Retreat held in September at Fortune Lake. The offerings at the convention morning worship totaled \$396, split between Churchwide and the Tom and Luanne Skrenes Fund for Leaders. Regular offerings (Form A) received during the convention totaled \$888 (75% goes to Churchwide, 25% to the SWO). The Convention offering received from the Congregational Units was \$1200, split 50/50 between Churchwide and SWO. The Sunday morning Retreat personal offering was \$512, split between Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp and SWO. Offerings received for the Mkuza School totaled \$354.50. We continue to support the school with their ongoing water project and vehicle need. There was also a memorial for SWO board member Jeannette Kuziej, who passed away from cancer; we sent \$108.50 to the Ontonagon County Cancer Association. There were displays of the pillowcase dresses and the sleeping mats for the homeless; you can keep making these.

SWO President, Melzee Jacobson asked the convention participants to put \$ .33 on the table in front of them. For 33 cents a day (\$10), it is a way to support the ministries of the Women of the ELCA on a consistent basis. The funds come directly from your checking account or charged to your credit card. Forms are available on the Women of the ELCA website; or I can mail you a copy if you wish. \$15.50 offering for "Faithful Friends" was collected.

Again, I want to thank you for your generosity throughout the year with your Regular (Form A) Offerings, as well as Convention and Retreat offerings. As treasurer, I am the one who should receive any offerings that you are passing along to Churchwide and the Synod. My address is 304 Lake Street, Ironwood MI 49938. A Regular Offering (on Form A) makes you a "giving unit". If you need additional copies of Form A, they are available on the Women of the ELCA website; or, I will be happy to send you additional copies. You can call me at 906-932-0476 (leave a message if I'm not there) or you can e-mail me [kriskarin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kriskarin@sbcglobal.net).

Blessings for the Lenten and Easter season.

## **A Message from... Synod Women's Organization Board Members**

### **A Message From Sue Hill:**

As the SWO historian I had the pleasure to travel with our President to L'Anse to collect the "small" albums. I have not had the time to go through all of them, I will do that as I have time.

From the size of these albums I can tell you that they contain only pictures and no records of previous annual meetings or Reflections. SWO board member Janet tells me she has a collection of them but will need help getting them to me. If anyone is traveling up that way maybe you could help her.

If you have board member pictures I would appreciate your sharing them. We are missing several years and I would like to be able to complete our albums as much as possible.

Some of the "older albums" have some wonderfully decorated pages. My kids tell me that when I start gluing things on pages it resembles a kindergarten project so I'm keeping current albums very simple so I don't embarrass them and make life harder for your next historian.

God's blessings to all,  
Sue Hill

### **Thoughts by Elaine Kuhlman on what is Discipleship?**

Sharing our love of the Lord with others by the way we conduct our lives.

Bible studies are a way to help us understand the word, express our feelings on what we learn. The Gather magazine, Cafe, Christ in our Home, Daily devotions, the Lutheran are all ways to read how others learn and live to help each other grow in the knowledge of our Lord. What we do with that knowledge is what is important in the eyes of the Lord.

### **Communications**

We continue updating the cluster information. This is an ongoing project with some many of our congregations struggling to keep their WELCA alive and active. I recently mailed a letter to our Cluster Leaders asking for the current information concerning each cluster, along with the dates of the upcoming spring meetings.

Another goal was to create a face book page for our SWO, which can be easily accessed by several women across the UP and northern Wisconsin. Melzee and Barb worked on getting that started. Don't forget to like us on facebook.

Feel free to express your ideas and thoughts to us at anytime! We welcome any ideas to improve our communications throughout our entire synod.

Pam Chouinard

May this find you all healthy in God's love. I've been asked to spend a little time with you, to tell you about a few things. I have been asked to be the liaison for the Menominee Cluster #5. We have a host for the September women's retreat! That in itself is pretty exciting. Our host group will be from the two-point Parish of Beaver American of Pound, WI and Porterfield Lutheran Church of Porterfield, WI. They have also secured Pastor Christine Forsythe as our chaplain! She was awesome in her capacity last year at the women's retreat! They met with Melzee and Barb Rice of the Executive Board on January 30, to start planning the retreat! We've also gotten an invitation to meet with Pastor John Wendt and to meet with the ladies from Our Savior in Menominee, MI, at their fireside meeting March 25. I've been told they are extending the invitation to anyone who would like to attend. It is exciting to see all this new activity! I am planning on attending this event with members of the Executive Board.

I am looking forward to expanding my horizons and serving my Lord!

May the Lord smile on us all!

Gail Schmidt

### **MKUZA GIRLS' SECONDARY SCHOOL**

### **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA**

Previously the Northern Great Lakes Synodical Women worked on a project raising money for the Mkuza Girls' School in which books were bought for their library and equipment was purchased for their science laboratory.

We again received a request for help from LilianB. Sikawa requesting assistance in raising monies to aid in pressing needs of:

- Lack of funding to extend the water from the source to other school areas.
- Securing sufficient source of power
- Securing school car for different school activities.

The estimated costs for portable water supply in the school is (cost listed in Tsh):

- Plumbing materials 3,663,000
- Construction of power house 556,000
- Buying of pumping machine 2,500,000
- Changing school electricity system from single phase to three phase 700,000
- Labor charge 1,200,000

Total 8,619,000 (US \$3,918.00)

School Car 14,000,000 (US \$6,364.00)

Our first check was submitted in the approximate amount of \$1,854.00 after the 2017 Fall Convention/Retreat.



I would like to encourage all units and individuals to prayerfully consider providing support (in any amount that is possible) and sending a check to Kris Carlson, SWO Treasurer marked for Mkuza School. With God's Help we can do this if we all pitch in together. Perhaps you can even have a fund raiser to gather funds. This year at our retreat we had donations for a used book table and were able to raise \$320.00 in donations from those who chose books from the table. Maybe a coffee fellowship after church service. I am sure that you all have creative ideas that would work.

The total need comes to \$10,282.00 and with our first check we have approximately \$8,428.00 remaining to complete the project.

Thank you all for considering action to join together to make a difference in the world and our companion synod.

Melzee Jacobson, SWO President

## News from... Fortune Lake

### FORTUNE LAKE NEWS

138 Fortune Lake Camp Rd, Crystal Falls, MI 49920

NEW Phone: 906.214.2267

Annual Meeting – **April 15, 2018**      2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

|                |                                     |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2:00 – 2:55 pm | Registration in Chapel              |
| 2:15 pm        | Camp Tour Meet in Chapel (Optional) |
| 3:00 pm        | Annual Meeting in Chapel            |
| 4:30 pm        | Dinner in Dining Hall               |

#### Camp Schedule

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Week 1 | <b>June 11 – 15, 2018</b><br>Victory Camp  |
|        | <b>June 13 – 15, 2018</b><br>Guys in the Skies A treehouse adventure camp for men & kids   |
| Week 2 | <b>June 17 – 22, 2018</b><br>Women & Kids Week   |
| Week 3 | <b>June 24 – 29, 2018</b><br>Junior High Night Owls, Veterans – High Schoolers 9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade Outside Day Camp #1                       |
| Week 4 | <b>July 1 – 3, 2018</b><br>Vagabond Sampler Week, Mighty Ones – Sampler Week. Mini Camp Sampler Week<br>Grandparent/Grandkid Sampler Week, Villager Sampler Week |
| Week 5 | <b>July 8 – 11, 2018</b><br>Mini Camp Week, Villager Week, Vagabond Week, Venturer Week, Leaders-In-Training   |
| Week 6 | <b>July 15 – 18, 2018</b><br>Mini Camp Week, Venturer Week, Vagabond Week. Villager Week   |
| Week 7 | <b>July 22 – 27, 2018</b><br>Rocket Camp, Art Camp, High School Night Owls   |
| Week 8 | <b>July 29 – August 3, 2018</b><br>Family Camp, Tree House Adventure, Onsite Day Camp #2   |
| Week 9 | <b>August 5 – 9, 2018</b><br>Victory Camp Week   |

|                       |                                     |                    |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| September 14, 2018    | Annual Synodical Women's Convention | 9:00 am – 4 pm     |
| September 14-16, 2018 | Annual Synodical Women's Retreat    | 5:00 pm – 11:00 am |

For more detailed information check: [fortunelake.org/camps-retreats](http://fortunelake.org/camps-retreats)

## Justice Corner

### Women and Justice

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America now has the draft of the Woman and Justice Social Statement available on its webpage. The link is listed below:

<http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice/Draft>

I would encourage each and every one of you to review the draft and submit your comments by the deadline September 30, 2018. The address can be found within the information available on the webpage as to where these comments may be sent and also within the draft itself. The task force has also developed and suggested various study resources for further information on gender issues, Lutheran theology and more. These may be found on the website also at the link below:

<http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice/resources>

This social statement was authorized by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and here it is 2018. It is projected that the Official text of this statement will be posted online in September 2019. In December 2019, it is projected that the final statement will be published with a Spanish translation published in the winter of 2020 and a study guide published in the winter of 2021. As you can see the Social Statements of the ELCA travel over a period of years with in-depth conversation and research.

### Human Trafficking

Another issue that is important to the Women of the ELCA is Human Trafficking. There was a resolution at the 2017 Triennial Convention that the Churchwide Organization (that's us ladies) would look into this issue over the next three years. Barb Rice shared the following article from the 2018 Living Lutheran Magazine with me and I would like to share it with you at this time.

#### **A vital response to human trafficking**

#### ***ELCA companions in Thailand offer new life for victims***

By [Karris Golden](#) January 17, 2018

As senior administrator of the New Life Center Foundation (NLCF), Jennifer Pedzinski's work involves shedding light on the realities of human trafficking. In doing so, she regularly encounters two misconceptions: human trafficking is all about sex and the major issue is parents who sell their children.

"While both of those things are still part of trafficking in the world, the issue is much more than that," said Pedzinski, a Baptist pastor.

The U.S. State Department defines "trafficking in persons" as "modern slavery." This can include sex trafficking, involuntary servitude, debt bondage and forced labor.

NLCF is based in Chiang Mai, Thailand, an area the State Department identifies as a high risk for human trafficking. While forced prostitution remains a major problem, labor trafficking is becoming more prevalent, Pedzinski said.

Most at risk are those who are undereducated, impoverished and lacking in professional job skills. "To find work, young and old, male and female alike are migrating out of impoverished, rural areas with little or no education to more developed areas and countries," she said. "They are recruited and offered a job. Because of

a range of factors—statelessness, illegal migration and force, threat or coercion—they end up in situations of exploitation.”

## **The root of the issue**

Much of the problem lies in human traffickers who prey upon those seeking better lives, said Franklin Ishida, ELCA director for Asia and the Pacific.

“It is often an economic issue in which people are seeking better incomes and hence get trapped,” he said. For example, a growing number of people are pressed into forced labor on fishing vessels. Ishida has witnessed this while visiting the Lutheran Church in Singapore’s maritime ministry.

“Workers are stuck for months on end in the open seas,” he said. “At issue is that some of the fish we consume in the United States comes from that ... and it’s difficult to track all this,” which makes human trafficking difficult to combat.

“How do we respond as a church to the whole issue?” Ishida asked. “In the Asian context, churches tend to focus on spiritual things; in the past, they dealt less with political, social or economic issues. That is changing.”

NLCF receives funding from [ELCA World Hunger](#) and is among the many ministries and institutions the denomination works with to combat human trafficking. The center works exclusively with young, ethnic-minority women from the Mekong subregion—Thailand, Myanmar, China and Laos—who are at risk for or are victims of human trafficking or sexual abuse.

## **Raising awareness**

“Many of us are aware of rescue and aftercare services, but part of eradicating modern slavery is addressing the issues that feed into the problem,” Pedzinski said.

Anti-trafficking campaigns in remote villages of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos educate villagers on safe migration, labor laws and human rights.

**“How do we respond as a church to the whole issue? In the Asian context, churches tend to focus on spiritual things; in the past, they dealt less with political, social or economic issues. That is changing.” — Franklin Ishida**

The Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT), an ELCA companion, also supports activities to raise awareness. In September its Office of Ecumenical Relations and the ELCA convened a consultation called “Countering Human Trafficking with Human Dignity in Asia Today” in Bangkok, Thailand. The event drew 59 people from Lutheran churches in Southeast Asia and the U.S.; Catholic churches, groups and charities; the Evangelical Fellowship of Thailand; the Foundation of the Seventh-Day Adventist Churches of Thailand; and nongovernmental organizations.

Attendees issued a statement titled “Mission of the Church to Prevent and Address Human Trafficking.” The document named trafficking as a “global, borderless crime against humanity that is prevailing inevitably in all societies.”

The document also acknowledged the millions of people worldwide subjected to human trafficking in factories, agribusinesses, home services, sexual trades and other businesses.

An estimated 3 million people per year from Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and other countries are victims of human trafficking in Thailand. The work done in Thailand by the CCT Office of Ecumenical Relations, NLCF and other organizations is vital, the document said, as the nation is “a country of origin, transit and destination of human trafficking.”



## What individuals, congregations can do

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The International Labor Organization estimates that 21 million people worldwide are victims of some type of forced labor. That and human trafficking's estimated \$32 billion-per-year income makes it the world's third largest crime industry, behind drugs and firearms.

Jennifer Pedzinski, senior administrator at New Life Center Foundation (NLCF) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, suggests congregations and individuals that want to help end human trafficking begin with education. "Read books. Attend conferences. Raise awareness in yourselves, your churches and your communities," she said.

To help raise awareness, the ELCA has a social message titled "[Commercial Sexual Exploitation.](#)" [Women of the ELCA](#) also has offered educational exhibits on trafficking at its gatherings and has a resource titled "Understanding and responding to human trafficking."

Pedzinski also suggested seeking out reputable, transparent ministries with which to partner. [Cherish All Children](#), for example, is an ELCA-affiliated ministry that fights human trafficking in the United States. And [ELCA World Hunger](#) financially supports NLCF's work.

"Do prevention work of your own, in your own community," she added. "Reduce risk right where you are by intentionally showing love and attention to the most vulnerable people [you know]."



Karris Golden

Karris Golden is a professional writer-editor and a member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls, Iowa. She writes a weekly faith and values column for The Courier and lives in rural northeast Iowa with her daughter, Zoey Golden Neessen. You can visit the link below for more information on things we need to know, Seeing Jesus in the face of the other, Luther's Small Catechism: Tasting it again for the first time and Restoring creation with faith. <https://www.livinglutheran.org/2018/01/a-vital-response-to-human-trafficking/>

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### **NGLSWO T-SHIRTS / SWEATSHIRTS**

**FOR SALE!** You may purchase a T-shirt / Sweatshirt with the Northern Great Lakes Synodical Women's Organization logo. A local printing shop is happy to help us out! Orders may be placed by sending them to **Kris Carlson, SWO Treasurer**.

#### **T-Shirts Quantity Long Sleeve T Quantity Sweatshirts Quantity**

Small 10.00 \_\_\_\_\_ 14.00 \_\_\_\_\_ 16.00 \_\_\_\_\_

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You may order individually, as a small group, or as a WELCA group. Orders will be shipped to one address for each order.

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\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note the Board Members will have shirts with Black Lettering (to designate they are Board Members).  
All other shirts for NGLSWO will have White Lettering.

T-Shirts are available in teal or sapphire blue. Long Sleeve T-Shirts and Sweatshirts are available in sapphire blue.

**Mail check and orders to: Kris Carlson, SWO Treasurer, 304 Lake St., Ironwood MI 49938**

NGLSWO Record Only: Check # \_\_\_\_\_

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You must be a member of an NGLS/ELCA Congregation. Complete this form, mail by deadline.

Event for which you are Requesting a Scholarship: (check only one)

Amount

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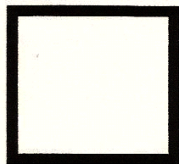
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**Our Purpose**

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world

**Our Mission**

To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.